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KAZAKHSTAN

SUCCESS STORY

Bringing Greater Access to Water

Through improved access to irrigation, USAID eased tensions in the Yassy community

The Yassy community near the city of Turkistan in Southern Kazakhstan, has been swelling in size as urban residents migrate out of the city, displacing farmers, many of whom no longer have access to reliable irrigation. Mounting tensions eased after USAID helped Yassy build an irrigation system to benefit local farmers.



Photo: USAID

USAID helped Yassy build an irrigation system and repair wells to benefit local citizens

“Now I am confident that my garden will survive and that I can develop my business and ensure financial stability for my family,” said Yassy farmer, Galymzhan Djalilov.

The USAID program - aimed at assisting with urban development and creating important infrastructure - collaborated with the local water users' association, which is responsible for the distribution of water and for the channel's maintenance. With USAID support, seven kilometers of irrigation channels were dredged mechanically and manually. Two wells were also rehabilitated, including the installation of a new pump and filtering equipment. Some 900 hectares of irrigated land became suitable for planting grain, vegetables, and fruit trees. The program also taught the farmers how to distribute water more equitably so that each of them receives a sufficient amount of water when they need it most.

Galymzhan Djalilov, one of the Yassy farmers affected by the USAID program, said he was happy with the irrigation canal rehabilitation. “When I decided to start my own farm, I bought a garden plot close to the irrigation canal. However, due to the poor irrigation system, my trees started to dry up and did not bear fruit. I worried that my investment and hard labor of three years had been wasted,” said Djalilov. “Now I am confident that my garden will survive and that I can develop my business and ensure financial stability for my family.”

In addition to improving irrigation and reducing tensions in the Yassy community, the USAID program created hundreds of long- and short-term jobs in the area. In Kazakhstan, the program has pulled together communities, municipal officials and businesses to work on building roads, water systems, and community centers, as well as on rehabilitating schools. These collaborative initiatives have benefited hundreds of thousands of people in the most economically vulnerable communities across the region.

Telling Our Story
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